

## Naked Creatures: *Robinson Crusoe*, The Beast, and The Sovereign

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I could not go quite naked; no, tho' I had been inclined to it, which I was not, nor could I abide the thoughts of it, tho' I was all alone. (Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*)

To begin with, I would like to entrust myself to words that, were it possible, would be naked. (Jacques Derrida)

Before Friday, why is Robinson Crusoe so hesitant to 'go naked'? What would it have meant for a man, alone on an island, to be 'naked'? According to Crusoe, the reason for his reluctance to go without clothing had more to do with the delicate nature of his European skin than with any fear of impropriety: 'I could not bear the heat of the sun so well when quite naked as with some cloaths on'.<sup>1</sup> But in providing this explanation, and given the fact that, were he 'inclined' Crusoe could have gone naked, one wonders about that curious phrase, 'which I was not'. Why not? Why could he not even 'abide the thoughts of it'? The implicit answer is that it would not have been 'proper' to do so, since only 'savages' go naked. As Brian Cummings has argued, in 'doing what is natural to them, the natives disturb the normative standards of the colonialists, which assume that genital shame is endemic to the human condition'.<sup>2</sup> And yet, as the only 'man' on the island, Crusoe is the only creature that could have actually gone 'naked'. Animals, as characterised by the anthropocentric logic of much of Western philosophy, cannot be truly 'naked.' As Jacques Derrida has recently summarised,

It is generally thought ... that the property unique to animals and what in the final analysis distinguishes them from man, is their being naked without knowing it. Not being naked therefore, not having knowledge of their nudity, in short without consciousness of good and evil. From that point on, naked without knowing it, animals would not in truth, be naked.<sup>3</sup>

Inasmuch as Crusoe's reasoning reflects this anthropocentric logic, the implication that nudity is 'proper to man' runs parallel to the ethnocentric logic that nudity is 'improper to man'. This distinction becomes

important not only because there are interesting philosophical and cultural narratives surrounding Crusoe's potential 'nakedness', but also because a great many readings of Defoe's novel proceed along the same parallel paths, following either the assumption that Crusoe's story is a story about 'man' and his environment or the assumption that it is a story about a 'white man' and his others.

Maxmillian E. Novak's classic *Defoe and the Nature of Man*, for example, reads *Robinson Crusoe* as an anthropocentric story about 'man' and his environment. According to Novak, one of Defoe's primary objectives in *Robinson Crusoe* was to underscore sociability as something 'proper to man'. Although some (like Rousseau) have tried to point to the benefits of Crusoe's solitude and radical individualism, Novak insists that Defoe 'believed that the freedom and purity of Crusoe's island were minor advantages compared to the comfort and security of civilization'.<sup>4</sup> In this sense *Robinson Crusoe* dramatises Defoe's belief that 'man was a social animal'.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Ian Watt argues in '*Robinson Crusoe* as a Myth' that the novel achieves 'myth status' primarily because it is remembered 'as a triumph of human achievement and enterprise, and as a favorite example of the elementary processes of political economy'; in other words, a book about what 'man' can accomplish, given the proper tools, time, and middle-class work ethic.<sup>6</sup> In such readings, the collective mythology of Crusoe's solitary life on an island is metonymically introduced as an illustration of what is 'proper to man' in general.

Other scholars, however, portray the primary discourse in *Robinson Crusoe* as a reflection of Crusoe's ethnocentric vision of white, European supremacy. In an introduction to *Race-ing Justice, Engendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality*, Toni Morrison draws an interesting (if problematic) parallel between Friday's service to Crusoe and Clarence Thomas's relation to the conservative administration in the US.<sup>7</sup> And, while Roxann Wheeler argues that Morrison's reading of *Robinson Crusoe* oversimplifies the complex 'racial multiplicity' at work in the novel, there can be little doubt postcolonial readings of this type carry significant weight in today's academic environment.<sup>8</sup> Edward Said, for example, refers to the 'inaugural' nature of Defoe's novelistic representations of imperialism: 'The prototypical modern realistic novel is *Robinson Crusoe*, and certainly not accidentally it is about a European who creates a fiefdom for himself on a distant, non-European island'.<sup>9</sup> In this sense, then, 'the novel [genre] is inaugurated in England by *Robinson Crusoe*, a

work whose protagonist is the founder of a new world, which he rules and reclaims for Christianity and England' (p. 70). Said's vision of the 'inauguration' of the novel here implies an ominous sign of things-to-come, as if Defoe were literally 'in-augury', pointing to imperial events just on the horizon. As Said puts it, 'Kipling and Conrad are prepared for by Austen and Thackeray, Defoe, Scott, and Dickens' (p. 75).

What many of these readings of the novel as either anthropocentric or ethnocentric fail to account for, however, is the constant and conspicuous appearance of 'beasts' in moments when Crusoe's relation to various non-Europeans is in question. As I argue in this essay, Crusoe's ethnocentrism throughout the novel relies explicitly on violent (and paradoxically 'bestial') performances of anthropocentrism, creating a theatrical and symbolic tension that not only dehumanises Crusoe's 'others', but also bestialises Crusoe as quasi-imperial sovereign. What is most interesting about this process, however, is the degree to which Crusoe's non-European subjects accept and, in the case of Friday, reproduce it.

Turning now to the novel, in one of Crusoe's early adventures before the island, and before Friday, Crusoe commandeers a ship and enslaves a young Moor named Xury. Together they meander directionless for days along the coast of Africa. In one scene Xury spies a rather large 'creature' on land 'on the side of [a] hillock fast asleep' (p. 49). Crusoe agrees with Xury that the creature is 'a dreadful monster indeed' and identifies it as 'a terrible great lyon' (p. 49). However, what happens next in the narrative seems to occur without precedent, without any apparent logical explanation, except perhaps to confirm Crusoe's status as sovereign of Xury and the ship. Crusoe commands Xury: 'you shall go on shoar and kill him' (p. 49), a command given without any suggestion as to how, or by what means Xury is to kill the monster. Xury is naturally terrified by the idea. 'Me kill!' he replies, 'he eat me at one mouth', which, according to Crusoe's ever-helpful clarification, means 'in one mouthful'. Then, quickly adopting a tone of condescending machismo, Crusoe explains:

I said no more to the boy, but bad him lye still, and I took our biggest gun, which was almost musquetbore, and loaded it with a good charge of powder and with two slugs, and laid it down; then I loaded another gun with two bullets, and a third, for we had three pieces, I loaded with five smaller bullets. (p. 49)

The show of power here is interesting. As given, without the possibility of guns or powder, Crusoe's command to Xury would have

meant certain violent death for the young Moor. But Crusoe's casual, if excessive, proliferation of weapons allows him to articulate his status as the one with power, the one with the capacity to kill, arbitrarily if he so desires, whereas Xury can only 'lye still', which, as we consider the state of the lion on shore ('on the side of [a] hillock fast asleep'), begins to suggest the purpose behind the coming violence. Xury is the lion, or, at least in a procedural sense, could be. The lion's fate forms an act of ritualised violence that illustrates for Xury the nature of his new sovereign. Crusoe continues:

I took the best aim I could with the first piece to have shot him into the head, but he lay so with his leg raised a little above his nose, that the slugs hit his leg about the knee and broke the bone. He started up growling at first, but finding his leg broke fell down again and then got up upon three legs and gave the most hideous roar that ever I heard. I was a little surprised that I had not hit him on the head; however, I took up the second piece immediately, and tho' he began to move off, fired again, and shot him into the head, and had the pleasure to see him drop, and make but little noise, but lay struggling for life. (p. 49)

Crusoe's choice of words in this passage is telling. Here we have a lion, not with a snout, paws, and claws, but with a 'head,' a 'nose,' a 'leg,' and a 'knee,' a lion not referred to as 'it' but as 'him,' a lion whose hideous roaring and 'struggling for life' seems hauntingly human – all of this a game of 'pleasure' for Crusoe, apparently for the sole purpose of reinforcing his position as sovereign in his relationship with Xury. While one could argue that a lion's gender is easily identifiable by the presence or absence of manes, the ambiguity in Crusoe's use of pronouns seems to indicate something more. For example, the only grammatical subject identifiable in the sentence immediately prior to the above quotation is 'him' – meaning Xury, not the lion. And if one insists on the clarity of Crusoe's narrative context, a scene on the next page multiplies this ambiguity. After noticing that there are people inhabiting the land, Crusoe signals to some of the inhabitants that he and Xury would like something to eat, upon which the natives bring them some dry flesh and corn:

We made signs of thanks to them, for we had nothing to make them amends [for the food]; but an opportunity offered that very instant to oblige them wonderfully, for while we were lying by the shore, came two mighty creatures, one pursuing the other (as we took it) with great fury, from the mountains toward the sea; whether it was the male pursuing the female, or whether they were in sport or in rage, we could not tell, any more than we could tell whether it was usual or strange, but I believe it was the latter; because in the first place, those ravenous

creatures seldom appear but in the night; and in the second place, we found the people terribly frightened, especially the women. (p. 51)

Notice that the relative identity of these 'creatures' remains a mystery until about ten lines into the paragraph when Crusoe says, 'we found the *people* terribly frightened, especially the women.' Prior to that detail, the reader has no sure way of determining whether these 'creatures' belong under the large and nebulous rubric of 'the animal' or whether they form part of the people already inhabiting the land. Any contextual clarity in Crusoe's distinguishing characterisation, however, diminishes further as he (again) violently dispatches one of these creatures. After noting the fright of the people, Crusoe says,

The man that had the lance or dart did not fly from them, but the rest did; however, as the two creatures ran directly into the water, they did not seem to offer to fall upon any of the negroes, but plunged themselves into the sea and swam about as if they had come for their diversion; at last one of them began to come nearer our boat than at first I expected, but I lay ready for him, for I had loaded my gun with all possible expedition, and bad Xury load both the others; as soon as he came fairly within my reach, I fired, and shot him directly into the head; immediately he sunk down into the water, but rose instantly and plunged up and down as if he was struggling for life; and so indeed he was. He immediately made to the shore, but between the wound, which was his mortal hurt, and the strangling of the water, he dyed just before he reached the shore. (p. 51)

Whereas Crusoe is uncertain as to the relative gender of these two creatures at the beginning of the paragraph, he seems quite positive at the end of the paragraph that the creature approaching his ship is a male ('*he* sunk down ... as if *he* was struggling for life ... *he* dyed just before *he* reached the shore'). In fact, were it not for the overall context of the passage, one could quite easily believe (grammatically anyway) that the 'he' in question is either the 'man that had the lance or dart' or Xury. The pronoun 'them' ('at last one of *them* began to come nearer our boat') is not entirely clear, and in the next paragraph Crusoe seems to deliberately capitalise on this confusion:

It is impossible to express the astonishment of these poor *creatures* at the noise and the fire of my gun; some of *them* were even ready to dye for fear, and fell down as dead with the very terror. But when they saw the *creature* dead and sunk in the water, and that I made signs to them to come to the shore, they took heart and came to the shore. [Author's emphasis] (p. 51)

To summarise the scene then, the 'creatures' (presumably animals) come down to the water; one of these 'creatures' (again, animal) is killed; then the 'creatures' (this time, people) are frightened by the

sound of Crusoe's gun; they saw the 'creature' (back to animal) dead and sunk. Used as generously as it is, the word 'creature' serves as an ambiguous label for all of Crusoe's subjects, and yet it is this word, accompanied only by a series of confusing pronouns, that Crusoe uses to distinguish between the death of a 'man that had the lance' and 'the animal'. The point here is not that the word 'creature' necessarily dehumanises non-Europeans (since 'creature' clearly has etymological roots in theology and is often used to refer to human or 'beast'), but rather that in the violence of the moment, one cannot explicitly gauge the traditional dichotomy between human and 'beast' – and it is out of this narrative confusion that Crusoe consistently emerges as sovereign.

If we return to Crusoe's violent attack on the lion, we see Xury 'take heart' and tell Crusoe that he would like to come ashore. Crusoe grants permission and 'so the boy jumped into the water, and taking a little gun in one hand swam to the shoar with the other hand, and coming close to the creature, put the muzzle of the piece to his ear and shot him into the head again, which dispatched him quite' (p. 49). This show of violence forms a rather curious baptism for Xury as he jumps into the water, and then participates in Crusoe's demonstration of sovereignty. Initially powerless and afraid of Crusoe's power, Xury is eventually allowed to partake of the violent ordinance, something that both seals his covenant with the sovereign Crusoe and heightens his ongoing fear of him.

The whole episode seems made just for Xury as a ritualised example of Crusoe's power, enshrined and memorialised, particularly as the skin of the animal becomes a kind of metonymic trophy for Crusoe:

I bethought my self, however, that perhaps the skin of him might one way or other be of some value to us, and I resolved to take off his skin if I could. So Xury and I went to work with him. [...] Indeed, it took us up both the whole day, but at last we got off the hide of him, and spreading it on the top of our cabin, the sun effectually dried it in two days' time, and it afterward served me to lye upon. (p. 50).

The skin marks Crusoe's new identity as infinitely more powerful and superior to any 'beast', and yet more and more like a beast all the time. In many ways, the beast – as desiccated here – represents both Crusoe and Xury: Crusoe, in the violent, powerful, bestial nature of the sovereign, and Xury, in the silenced, disemboweled, sacrificial nature of the subject.

In a related sense, the nature of sovereignty as characterised by a great deal of political philosophy is that it must periodically, and powerfully, reserve the right to become 'bestial'. That is, the sovereign

must be able to give and to make, but also to suspend the law. In order to attain sovereignty, the sovereign must appear before and above the law. There must have been a moment when the sovereign's word became the law, and the power of this moment must be preserved through an occasional rupture or overruling of the law. In many ways, then, the sovereign is the supreme *outlaw*, that is, outside the law.<sup>10</sup> As Thomas Hobbes theorised in *The Leviathan*, since beasts lack speech, and are therefore incapable of social contract, they stand perpetually outside the law, but the sovereign must also stand outside the dictates of the social contract if his sovereignty is to effectively extinguish the kind of violent anarchy that would result in a Hobbesian state of nature.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the man/animal dichotomy must be fluid and unstable in order to be useful for the sovereign. Thus, maintaining the possibility of dehumanising and hurting 'people' by invoking the category of 'animal' becomes as important for the sovereign as psychologically retaining an 'animal' connection to humans and other creatures (without which cruelty would not be possible). Torturers find little pleasure, for instance, in twisting the arm of a chair.<sup>12</sup>

The ideological complexities of Crusoe's interaction with – and reflection of – beasts become similarly important as he considers his role in relation to the subjects of his island. After being shipwrecked for several years, Crusoe experiences considerable, even pathological, anxiety at the first sign of other human life on the island (a 'naked footprint' in the sand): 'I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree, looking behind me at every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man' (p. 162). Of course, the most important feature of this particular footprint is that it not a *shoeprint*, but a *naked footprint*, signifying for Crusoe the presence of another being, a non-European, an 'other' who must be confronted and, if necessary, subjected. The naked footprint, in other words, is terrifying to Crusoe precisely because it is naked.

However, the potential power in harnessing this naked fear is something Crusoe has already learned with Xury. Immediately following Crusoe's violent rescue of Friday from cannibals, Crusoe begins the imperial process of reeducating his new companion. It becomes Crusoe's personal Christian mission to wean Friday from human flesh. Crusoe reasons, 'in order to bring Friday off from his horrid way of feeding, and from the relish of a cannibal's stomach, I ought to let him taste other flesh, so I took him out with me one morning to the woods' (p. 213). It

is on this mission of teaching Friday what is 'proper to man' that an interaction with 'beasts' allows Crusoe to emerge again as sovereign:

I went indeed intending to kill a kid out of my own flock, and bring him home and dress it; but as I was going, I saw a she goat lying down in the shade, and two young kids sitting by her. I caught hold of Friday. 'Hold,' says I, 'stand still,' and made signs to him not to stir; immediately I presented my piece, shot and killed one of the kids. The poor creature, who had at a distance seen me kill the savage his enemy, but did not know or could imagine how it was done, was sensibly surprised, trembled and shook, and looked so amazed that I thought he would have sunk down. (p. 213)

Here, again, we have a command to 'stand still' while Crusoe violently kills a young 'kid'. Confused at the sudden violence, Friday, the 'poor creature', falls to his knees and embraces Crusoe, begging his new master not to kill him. Seeing Friday's reaction, Crusoe ponders the situation:

I soon found a way to convince [Friday] that I would do him no harm, and taking him up by the hand, *laughed at him* ... and by and by I saw a great fowl like a hawk sit upon a tree within shot; so to let Friday understand a little *what I would do*, I called him to me again, pointed at the fowl, which was indeed a parrot, tho' I thought it had been a hawk; I say, pointing to the parrot, and to my gun, and to the ground under the parrot to let him see I would make it fall, I made him understand that I would shoot and kill that bird; accordingly I fired and bad him look, and immediately he saw the parrot fall, he stood like one frightened again, notwithstanding all I had said to him; and I found he was the more amazed because he did not see me put anything into the gun; but thought that there must be some wonderful fund of death and destruction in that thing, able to kill man, beast, bird, or any thing near or far off, and the astonishment this created in him was *such as could not wear off for a long time*; and I believe if I would have let him, he would have worshipped me and my gun. [Author's emphasis] (p. 214)

Much like the interaction with Xury and the lion, this passage illustrates an arbitrary and violent interaction with 'beasts' designed specifically for Crusoe's spectator subject. As Crusoe says, the act is intended to 'let Friday understand a little what I would do', what he would do, we might understand, if the situation called for it, if Friday were to somehow disobey his new master. Certainly, Crusoe's laughter demonstrates that the fear he felt upon seeing the naked footprint has been transferred, or deferred, in a way, to Friday.

If Crusoe's demonstrations with the goat and parrot are enacted in order to educate Friday about what is 'proper to man', Friday's later interaction with a bear shows that he is an apt pupil. In one of the final scenes in the novel when Crusoe and Friday have already been rescued, they travel to Lisbon in order to clarify some of Crusoe's earlier



financial dealings. During this journey, Crusoe and his companions meet up with a pack of wolves and a large bear. The symbolic function of the wolves is rather easily explained. Some have argued, for instance, that the wolves appear at the end of the novel (but go missing from the island) because Crusoe's island ecology is predicated on an infinite proliferation of 'useful' creatures. Furthermore, the fact that Crusoe's encounter with the wolves (creatures traditionally characterised as 'outlaws'<sup>13</sup>) occurs in Spain and France is equally important. Defoe, we know, understood that England was very much in a kind of imperial competition with Spain and France. Defoe's own bankruptcy was due in part to the loss of his ships when England went to war with France and Louis XIV.<sup>14</sup>

However, the company's interaction with the bear requires a bit more explanation. When Friday sees the bear, Crusoe says, 'it was easy to see joy and courage in the fellow's countenance; "O! O! O!" says Friday three times, pointing to him; "O Master! You give me te leave! Me shakee te hand with him; me make you good laugh"' (p. 288). Friday then sits down, takes off his boots, changes into a pair of 'flat shoes', gives his horse to another servant in the group, takes his gun, runs over to the bear, and throws a stone at him.

At this point, Crusoe and his companions express some reservations about the wisdom in Friday's demonstration: 'You Dog', says Crusoe, 'is this your making us laugh? Come away, and take your horse, that we may shoot the creature' (p. 289). But Friday is determined to see this ordinance through to its violent, comic end. In his only act of disobedience in the novel, Friday repeats the phrase Crusoe had used with him, 'No shoot, no shoot, *stand still*, you get much laugh' (p. 289, author's emphasis). Friday then runs toward a great oak tree, lays his gun on the ground 'at about five or six yards from the bottom of the tree', and then 'gets nimbly up the tree' (p. 289). The bear follows, 'scrambling' into the tree:

When we came to the tree, there was Friday got out to the small end of a large limb of the tree, and the bear got about half way to him; as soon as the bear got out to that part where the limb of the tree was weaker, 'Ha,' says he to us, 'now you see me teachee the bear dance'; so he falls a jumping and shaking the bough, at which the bear began to totter, but stood still, and begun to look behind him, to see how he should get back; then indeed we did laugh heartily: But Friday had not done with him by a great deal; when he sees him stand still, he calls out to him again, as if he had supposed the Bear could speak English, 'What you no come farther? pray you come farther'; so he left jumping and shaking the bough; and

the bear, just as if he had understood what he said, did come a little further, then he fell a jumping again, and the Bear stopped again. (pp. 289–290)

As Carol Houlihan Flynn has noticed, in this passage a very human-like bear apparently understands enough English that he can follow Friday's commands.<sup>15</sup> Friday, for his part, is suspended in the limbs of the tree, where the branches become like the strings on a marionette. He shakes the branches, and the bear is forced to dance. And it is this theater of the marionette – the foreplay to Friday's violence – that finally produces the promised laughter in Crusoe: 'Friday danced so much, and the bear stood so ticklish, that we had laughing enough indeed' (p. 290). Hanging in the branches so as to be liable to totter and fall at the slightest touch, unfixed, unstable, the bear is completely at the mercy of Friday's movements; this is the dance that Friday is teaching the bear, and it is a complicated one – the same dance, in fact, that Friday has done for Crusoe. Friday lets himself down from the tree, and the bear, seeing his enemy gone, begins climbing back down as well, 'and just before he could set his hind feet upon the ground, Friday stept up close to him, clapt the muzzle of his piece into his ear, and shot him dead as a stone' (p. 290).

So what exactly is Friday demonstrating here? I would argue that, in this scene, Friday has become the perfect example of how interactions with beasts create moments of sovereignty that are designed to colonise the mind of native peoples. Friday has not only demonstrated his allegiance to Crusoe, but he has also acknowledged and accepted the means by which it was acquired. He has become like Crusoe, but remains subject to him. Certainly, this scene with the bear demonstrates that the relationship between the colonised and coloniser is much more complicated than Engels implied in his reading of the novel: 'In the same way that Robinson [Crusoe] was able to obtain a sword, we can just as well suppose that Friday might appear one fine morning with a loaded revolver in his hand, and from then on the whole relationship of violence is reversed'.<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, Friday does have a loaded revolver, and the relationship of violence not only remains intact, but it is also celebrated in ritualised laughter.

In the end, Crusoe has taught Friday that they each inhabit a world where the boundaries between the human and its others are necessarily fluid, but it is Crusoe, as proto-imperial sovereign, who retains the power to instantiate and then violate these thresholds. What Friday learns and reproduces with such alacrity is precisely what postcolonial writers have been trying for so many years to subvert and revise. As

Frantz Fanon explains, the 'logical conclusion' of this colonial discourse is the 'dehumanisation' of the native:

[O]r to speak plainly, it turns him into an animal. In fact, the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms. He speaks of the yellow man's reptilian motions, of the stink of the native quarter, of breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of gesticulations. When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary.<sup>17</sup>

However, Fanon is only half right. The discourse of imperial sovereignty not only 'dehumanises' the native. It also bestialises the sovereign. In the construction of the discourse of empire the boundary between 'man' and 'the animal' can never be absolute because the sovereign must reserve the right to be, and to cause others to be, both.

As the editors of *At the Borders of the Human* argue, 'Theories of the human relentlessly produce animals, people, conditions as not human. Yet this production of the non-human, although often violent, is never a simple choice in which *x* is human and *y* is not, but a continual and repeated process determined by circumstances'.<sup>18</sup> The story of *Robinson Crusoe*, I argue, dramatises the fluidity and mutability of those circumstances, particularly in the mind of a white, male European engaged in a process of domination over others. The way in which *Crusoe* simultaneously perpetuates and contradicts the intricate balance between 'man' and the 'animal' in Defoe's novel points to one of the more important and troubling aspects of this dichotomy: how the rule of force has often been misconstrued as the rule of 'logic' ('logos'), 'justice', 'reason', even 'truth'.

## NOTES

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1 Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, ed. by Angus Ross, (London: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 144. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

2 Brian Cummings, 'Animal Passions and Human Sciences: Shame, Blushing and Nakedness in Early Modern Europe and the New World', in *At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert, Susan Wiseman, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 26–50, p. 34.

- 3 Jacques Derrida, 'The Animal That Therefore I am (More to Follow)', *Critical Inquiry*, 28 (2002), 369–418 (p. 373). Derrida's use of the word 'man' to refer to the species reflects an ironic stance, since, as he points out, the question of 'sovereignty' in the discourse of anthropocentrism usually referred to adult males. Because the phrase 'proper to man' was so entrenched in these discourses, my use of it should also be read with a certain irony. See also Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2005); Derrida's own reading of *Robinson Crusoe* (part of his lectures on the 'Beast and the Sovereign') focuses less on the cultural and political nature of *Crusoe*'s relationship with non-European others, and more on the epistemological and ethical implications in *Crusoe*'s island solitude.
- 4 Maximilian E. Novak, *Defoe and the Nature of Man*, (New York and London, 1963), p. 22.
- 5 Novak, p. 22. See also Carol Kay, *Political Constructions: Defoe, Richardson, and Sterne in Relation to Hobbes, Hume, and Burke*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).
- 6 Ian Watt, 'Robinson Crusoe as a Myth' in *Robinson Crusoe: Norton Critical Edition*, ed. by Michael Shinagel (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), pp. 288–306 (p. 289, author's emphasis).
- 7 Toni Morrison, 'Introduction: Friday on the Potomac', in *Race-ing Justice, Engendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality*, ed. by Toni Morrison, (New York: Pantheon, 1992), pp. vii–xxx.
- 8 Roxann Wheeler, "'My Savage," "My Man": Racial Multiplicity in *Robinson Crusoe*', *ELH*, 62.4 (1995), pp. 821–861.
- 9 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (New York: Vintage, 1994), p. xii. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.
- 10 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 104–111.
- 11 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by Richard Tuck, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 97.
- 12 I am particularly grateful to my respondents at the *Literary Beasts* conference where this idea first emerged.
- 13 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp. 104–111. Agamben, pp. 69–72; Jean De La Fontaine, *Selected Fables*, trans. by James Michie, (London: Penguin Books, 1982), pp. 11–12.
- 14 Maximilian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 97.
- 15 Carol Houlihan Flynn, 'Consumptive Fictions: Cannibalism and Defoe', *The Body in Swift and Defoe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 149–159.
- 16 Friedrich Engels, 'Theory of Force', *Anti-Dühring* (1877), trans. by Emile Burns, <<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1877/anti-duhring/ch15.htm>> [accessed 16 May 2005] (par. 1 of 13).
- 17 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p. 42.
- 18 Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert, Susan Wiseman, 'Introduction: the Dislocation of the Human', *At the Borders of the Human*, ed. by Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert, Susan Wiseman, (London: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 1–9, p. 2.